



Testimony Before the Committee on Energy and Technology

Regarding

**H.B. No. 7251 AAC LONG-TERM CONTRACTS FOR CERTAIN CLASS I GENERATION
PROJECTS AND THE RESIDENTIAL SOLAR INVESTMENT PROGRAM AND
REQUIRING A STUDY OF THE VALUE OF SOLAR**

Submitted by **John Humphries**

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March 5, 2019

Dear Co-Chairs Needleman and Arconti, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony regarding H.B. No. 7251 AAC Long-Term Contracts For Certain Class I Generation Projects And The Residential Solar Investment Program And Requiring A Study Of The Value Of Solar.

The CT Roundtable on Climate and Jobs builds alliances among diverse constituencies to combat climate change and promote racial, economic and environmental justice. We embrace our diversity as a source of power, recognizing that our shared interests in a sustainable climate and a just economy are stronger than any specific issues that may tend to divide us. We believe the climate crisis presents an opportunity to build thriving local economies that are not only more sustainable but also more just and equitable.

While this bill seeks to address some of the negative impacts of P.A. 18-50 on Connecticut's solar industry, the proposed changes are insufficient to reverse the harm done by last year's law.

The extension of RSIP and LREC/ZREC merely delays implementation of a rate structure that was found unworkable by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). Without addressing the shortcomings of the underlying structure, a delay in implementation does not represent significant progress.

The publicly-stated intent of last year's negotiations around the language in SB9 was to preserve a net metering option for residential, commercial and industrial customers. Advocates had argued strongly that PURA should be authorized to establish netting periods and rate design within the context of a contested proceeding so that the new structures would be informed by expert testimony and factual information about the on-the-ground technical capabilities of the utilities' metering and billing infrastructure. Instead, the legislature insisted on prescribing narrow limitations that proved to be impossible for PURA to implement without abandoning net metering altogether.

If legislators truly wish to redress the flaws in PA 8-50, they will have to do more than simply extend RSIP and LREC/ZREC. The best solution would be to halt implementation of PA 18-50, pending completion of a comprehensive Value of Solar study like those undertaken by a

number of other states in recent years, many of which were compiled and reviewed by the 2016 Brookings Institute report “Rooftop Solar: Net Metering is a Net Benefit.” We support the call by some of our allies to have such a study conducted by an independent consultant engaged by PURA, in partnership with the CT Green Bank. The study envisioned by Section 3 of this bill would have to be rushed if it were to be concluded before the modest extension of RSIP is exhausted, and such a study is unlikely to be funded in the current budget crisis.

Until such a comprehensive study can be completed, the legislature should revoke the changes made last year to the state’s net metering structure.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB 7251.

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